

Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent
24th Session
March 25-29

Data for Racial Justice

presentation by Dominique Day

Country Visits in North America

by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

United States of America

- Country visit: 19-29 Jan. 2016
- Significant data exists + increasingly open
- Climate of racial violence; highlighted severe racial disparities in data about people of African descent and a lack associated efforts to mitigate racial disparity.
- Since WG Report | Recently, deleting data (EPA: Climate, police shootings/racism) → significant impact to people of African descent

Canada

- Country visit: 17-21 Oct. 2016
- wealth of information + data on socioeconomic indicators
- serious lack of race-based data + research, which could inform prevention, intervention + treatment strategies for African Canadians.
- In 2016, an Anti-Racism Directorate was established to eliminate systemic racism and to promote fair practices and policies across Ontario, including anti-racism data collection based on disaggregated race-based data and offering an anti-racism perspective to inform and support ministries

Why Should I Collect Data if it Exposes Us?

Racial Bias is Embedded in Decision-Making in Algorithms and Coding

- Already evident in decision-making in health, employment, education, and other fields

Disparities Point to Potential Sites of Intervention

- More types of data = more nuance
- More years of data = more reliability

Innovation = New Sites of Racism + Bias

Policy, Not Scientific, Decisions Required

- Experiencing equality + human rights requires active anti-racism measures.

Don't Just TALK about it, BE about it

- “Racist” is a serious charge, but we license and tolerate, racially biased decision-making, i.e., racism, routinely

AI, Ain't I A Woman, by Joy Buolamwini



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